

# CHAMP

USU CONSORTIUM  
FOR HEALTH AND  
MILITARY PERFORMANCE



# Eating Globally

Deuster/Kemmer/Tubbs/Zeno

# Overview



- **Issues related to cultural awareness**
- **Foodborne illness**
  - **Causes and treatment**
  - **Foods to avoid**
- **Traveler's diarrhea**
- **Water purification**
- **Making wise food selections**



# Cultural Awareness



- **Culture involves:**
  - Language, beliefs, religion, values, behaviors, food preferences, eating habits, etc
- **Recognize, understand, appreciate, and respect different perspectives**
- **Avoid stereotypes, prejudice, and insulting the host**
  - Learn the eating customs prior to deployments
  - Types of food and animal parts used may vary
- **Know and respect Holiday and ceremonial meals**





# Know Local Customs: Basics



- Punctuality
- Customary greetings
- Bring the hostess a gift, food or beverages
- Don't criticize
- Do not rush through your meals
  - Meal may be viewed as a social event
  - Do not be wasteful or gorge yourself
  - Appreciate the offer
  - Clean your plate or leave some food remaining

*View a table of Specific Food Customs and Stable Crops in Various Countries on the Food in Every Country website*



# Know Local Customs



- **Who should begin the meal**
- **Appetizers**
- **Soup**
- **Meat/ Fish**
- **Desserts**
- **Beverages**
- **Food Offerings**
- **Beliefs associated with specific foods**



# Know Local Customs



- **Types of eating utensils & how to use them (if used at all)**
- **Which hand to use when dining**
- **Proper dress attire and traditions**
- **Who should pay the bill**
- **Local foods and their importance**





# Foodborne Illness



- **Caused by bacteria, viruses, parasites, and/or various harmful toxins**
  - Higher risk sources (street vendor vs. private home)
- **Food choices may be limited in developing countries and impolite to refuse an offer**
- **Important to be courteous of food preparation and consumption customs**
- **Pay attention to food & drink:**
  - Avoid the common gastrointestinal distress
- **First common symptoms include:**
  - nausea, vomiting, abdominal cramps & diarrhea



# Foods Associated with Foodborne Illness



- **Raw meat & poultry**
- **Ground beef & raw eggs**
- **Unpasteurized milk**
- **Fresh squeezed fruit juice**
- **Raw shellfish (oysters)**
- **Raw fruits and vegetables**
- **Alfalfa & bean sprouts**
- **Contaminated water may harm washed produce**





# Treating Foodborne Illness



- **Illness caused by viruses should improve in 2-3 days without antibiotic therapy**
- **Very important to wash hands thoroughly**
  - **Alleviates current symptoms**
  - **Prevents spread of infection**



# Preventing and Treating Foodborne Illness



- **Pepto-Bismol**
  - Possible side effects: temporary blackening of tongue and stools, occasional nausea, constipation, & rarely, ringing in the ears
- Treatment depends on the symptoms
- Avoid dehydration from diarrhea or vomiting



# Treatment of Traveler's Diarrhea



- Requires replacing lost fluids and salts lost
- Oral rehydration solution salt (ORS)
  - Most effective
  - Readily available in pharmacies & stores in developing countries
  - Important to follow directions of preparation
- Sports drinks, such as Gatorade, do not replace the losses correctly





# Treatment of Traveler's Diarrhea (cont.)



- **Pepto-Bismol decreases diarrhea frequency:**
  - May shorten the duration of the illness
- **Over-the-counter antidiarrheal medication (Lomotil or Imodium) decrease the number of diarrheal stools:**
  - May cause complications in people with serious infections
- **Antidiarrheal medication provides symptomatic relief:**
  - May worsen the illness if high fever or bloody stools are present
- **Antibiotics may shorten term of illness**
  - Must be prescribed by health care provider



# Consult a Health Care Provider with Symptoms of:



- **High fever (  $>101.5^{\circ}\text{F}$  )**
- **Blood in the stools**
- **Prolonged vomiting**
- **Signs of dehydration**
  - Decrease in urination
  - Dry mouth & throat
  - Feeling dizzy upon standing
- **Diarrhea that lasts more than 3 days**



# Water Purification



- **Only drink bottled water from approved sources**
- **Boil water**
- **Disinfect water with iodine or chlorine**
- **Water purification tablets eliminate Giardia, bacteria, viruses, and removes sediment**
- **Iodine tablets clarify and disinfect polluted/suspended water to make it safe**







# Make Wise Food Selections



- **Hot, cooked food is usually safe**
- **Be careful when consuming fish**
- **Buy only cooked street vendor foods**
- **Avoid raw ingredients**
- **Choose hot beverages over cold, canned or bottled, when possible**
- **Avoid ice in beverages**
- **Use purified water to brush your teeth**





# Make Wise Food Selections



- **Clean fruits & vegetables well & avoid buying already peeled products**
- **Avoid cream or meat filled bakery products**
- **Order cooked meat well done**
- **Do not eat food sitting at room temperature for > 4 hours**
- **Boiled & fried foods are generally safe**
- **High salt, sugar or acid levels prevent bacteria growth**



# Key Points



- **Be aware of cultural differences, including types of food and local eating utensils**
- **Take precautions to avoid foodborne illness**
- **Make wise food and beverage selections when eating on the economy**
- **Contaminated water may severely affect health: purify your water!**
- **Carry Pepto-Bismol and seek medical treatment for symptoms from contaminated foods or beverages**

